United Nations A/52/PV.71

General Assembly
Fifty-second Session

Official Records

71st plenary meeting
Monday, 15 December 1997, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Udovenko ..... (Ukraine)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 17 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(h) Appointment of the members of the Consultative Committee on the United Nations Development Fund for Women

The President: The terms of office of the present five members of the Consultative Committee appointed under General Assembly decisions 49/317 A and B of 5 and 16 December 1994, respectively, expire on 31 December 1997.

Following consultations, I have appointed Austria, the Bahamas, Romania, Thailand and Uganda as members of the Consultative Committee for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 1998.

May I consider that the General Assembly takes note of these appointments?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (h) of agenda item 17?

It was so decided.

(i) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences

Note by the Secretary-General (A/52/109)

The President: As indicated in document A/52/109, since the terms of office of the Bahamas, Belgium, Ghana, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Latvia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Senegal expire on 31 December 1997, it is necessary for the President of the General Assembly to appoint, during the current session, seven members to fill the resulting vacancies. The members so appointed will serve for a period of three years beginning on 1 January 1998.

After consultations with the Chairmen of the Groups of African States, Asian States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States and Western European and other States, I have appointed Argentina, the Bahamas, Belgium, Benin, Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Lesotho as members of the Committee on Conferences, with effect from 1 January 1998.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of these appointments?

It was so decided.

97-86740 (E)

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The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (i) of agenda item 17?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 47

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Slovenia to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution on agenda item 47, entitled "The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina", contained in document A/52/L.67/Rev.1. In addition to the sponsors listed in the draft, the following countries joined as sponsors after its formal completion: Austria, the Netherlands and Kuwait.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be a matter of international interest and concern. While important progress has been made in the implementation of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, it is obvious that further international efforts are needed. The draft resolution submitted to the General Assembly today addresses the most important among them.

The last two years have brought significant change to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement and the international action for its implementation have stopped the war and preserved the independence, sovereignty, legal continuity and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized borders.

The Peace Agreement represented a significant achievement and an important contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. The implementation of certain aspects of it, such as the establishment of a lasting cessation of hostilities, the progress made in the implementation of articles II and IV of the Agreement on Regional Stabilization, and the successful holding of municipal elections on 13 and 14 September 1997 throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, have further contributed to the international stability and security in the region. The efforts of the High Representative in the implementation of the peace process have gained wide international recognition and support.

Among recent events, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of the meeting of the Peace Implementation Council held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997. The Council reviewed progress in the implementation of the Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the Peace Implementation Conference in London on 4 and 5 December 1996 and the Ministerial Meeting of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board in Sintra, Portugal, in May 1997.

At its recent meeting in Bonn, the Peace Implementation Council confirmed that there is no alternative to the Peace Agreement as the foundation for the political and economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina, its two multi-ethnic entities and its three constituent peoples. It reconfirmed the commitment of the international community to continue to strengthen and support the efforts for reconciliation, tolerance and democracy as well as for economic and social development in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The vital contribution of the multinational Stabilization Force in providing a secure environment for the implementation of the Peace Agreement has been generally recognized, and it is particularly important that the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference confirmed an emerging consensus on the need for an international military presence to continue beyond June 1998. This remains indispensable for the maintenance of a stable security environment necessary for the implementation of civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement.

Draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1 addresses all these aspects of the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and expresses support for the efforts to establish peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and throughout the region. Moreover, the draft places a special emphasis on those aspects of the peace process which require further international efforts. In particular, it notes the content of the fourth annual report of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. That report describes the uneven degrees of compliance by the different parties, a problem which continues to give rise to serious concern.

In this context, the draft resolution notes the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference, which state that all persons indicted for war crimes must be handed over to the Tribunal for justice to

be dispensed impartially, under the terms of the Peace Agreement and Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference referred to in the draft resolution draw particular attention to the failure to carry out this obligation by the authorities of Republika Srpska and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It is the obligation of all the parties to hand over to the Tribunal all indicted persons in territories under their control and to otherwise comply with the orders of the Tribunal and to cooperate with the Tribunal. The draft welcomes the efforts to secure compliance with the orders of the Tribunal, consistent with the Security Council mandate.

Another important aspect of the peace process in Bosnia concerns the return of refugees and freedom of movement. The right of refugees and displaced persons to return voluntarily to their homes is strongly reaffirmed in the draft resolution. All the parties are called upon to establish the conditions necessary for the return of refugees and displaced persons. The acts of intimidation and violence and the killings, including those designed to discourage the voluntary return of refugees, are strongly condemned.

The draft also addresses a number of other issues of the implementation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the obligation of both the entities to cooperate fully with the Supervisor for Brcko. It notes that the conclusions of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference stated that the outcome of the Arbitration Award in March 1998 would be significantly affected by the degree of compliance shown by the parties.

Finally, the draft stresses the importance of economic revitalization and reconstruction for the successful consolidation of peace, and commends the efforts of a large number of international organizations, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations for their roles in the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

In a forward-looking manner, the draft resolution emphasises the importance of the efforts to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which has to be respected and ensured in all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, it stresses the importance of democratization and the holding of elections throughout the country, and calls upon all parties to cooperate fully and in good faith in ensuring substantial functioning of all the common institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with the Peace Agreement.

The content of the draft resolution reflects both the urgency and the universality of concern for the implementation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a problem of universal concern, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to call for the attention of the General Assembly, the most representative body of the international community. Many delegations participated in the preparation of the present draft resolution. We are grateful for their input and for the wide support already expressed. We hope that the draft resolution will therefore be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Sacirbey (Bosnia and Herzegovina): My delegation will be able neither to co-sponsor nor to vote in favour of the draft resolution before us. But that is exactly why the Assembly should support the draft resolution regarding the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The draft resolution makes a positive contribution to the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It strives to achieve consensus both among the delegations here at the United Nations and within my Government in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unfortunately, some who formally hold positions of power within my Government may lack genuine commitment to the peace process and the State which they are sworn to serve. In fact, some may be using their official positions and legitimacy to undermine the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement and the State of Bosnia itself.

This morning I spoke with my Minister, Mr. Jadranko Prlić, and he gave his full support for our co-sponsorship of the draft resolution. Unfortunately, while two parties are prepared to co-sponsor and fully support, one is not.

As a consequence, we find ourselves in a strange Hamlet-like dilemma: to co-sponsor or not to co-sponsor. For now, we will not co-sponsor, especially without a consensus within our own central Government. We will not be accused of undermining the central institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thus unwittingly contributing to the very process which we criticize here. This is exactly why the Assembly must send the message that it will do its utmost to support the draft resolution and thereby support the development of the peace process and the State. Otherwise, the lack of support here, and the blockage and obstruction of our institutions from

within, will result in the non-existence of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A State cannot for ever advance and survive on the basis of formality receiving priority over substance. Unfortunately, that is our situation now. My delegation's commitment to the formalities of our institutions will hopefully give the State and all our leadership the time and the opportunity to translate this into the real functioning of such institutions for the benefit of all Bosnians, their State and the peace process. In the meantime, through the Assembly's support for the draft resolution, the substance of peace will be promoted.

The draft resolution, frankly, is nothing controversial. It is completely in accordance with the Peace Agreement, relevant Security Council resolutions, Bosnia's Constitution and the recently concluded Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn, Germany. The draft resolution on this subject is important because, once a year, it gives the General Assembly — the entire membership of the United Nations — the opportunity to voice views on this matter that is important not only for us but also for regional and global security and the credibility and image of the United Nations.

In addition, and unfortunately, my delegation will not be able to vote in favour of the draft resolution if it is brought to a vote because there has not as yet been a consensus within my Government to pay our past assessment and dues to the Organization. Unfortunately, our membership in this institution, one of the most visible signs of our sovereignty and survival, is also being obstructed.

We will overcome.

Thanks to the Assembly's support today, the job will be made more manageable.

Let me here take the opportunity to thank all of the sponsors and those voting in favour. Ambassador Danilo Türk's leadership and commitment of time is especially appreciated.

Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg) *(interpretation from French)*: I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the European Union concerning the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, under agenda item 47. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — namely, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — as well as Iceland and Norway, associate themselves with this statement.

The European Union wishes first of all to thank the High Representative for the relentless efforts he and his team have devoted over many months, and often under difficult conditions, to assisting in the establishment of a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Union would also like to express its gratitude to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the members of the International Police Task Force, the members of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina — in particular those of the Stabilization Force — the specialized agencies of the United Nations and the other international and non-governmental organizations for the services they have rendered for the cause of peace and reconciliation in that country. Finally, the European Union pays tribute to the victims of the conflict and to all those who died discharging their duties in the service of peace on behalf of the international community.

The European Union recalls that there is no alternative to the Peace Agreement as the foundation for the political and economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two multi-ethnic entities. The process initiated two years ago has been characterized by the fact that the military section of the agreements has been implemented. Furthermore, the international community has launched a substantial effort to rebuild infrastructure in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While 1997 has seen real progress, further efforts will still have to be made in such diverse areas as the re-establishment of security, the indictment of those responsible for war crimes, the establishment of a free media, the return of refugees and displaced persons, economic rehabilitation and the holding of local elections. It is true that these results will remain fragile if further progress in the fields of common institutions and the economy is not made soon.

Much more could have been achieved had the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina fully contributed to the construction of a civic and democratic society in the country. As we enter the third year of implementation of the Peace Agreement and the last phase of the consolidation period, major efforts are still needed to ensure the functioning of viable structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two entities. The democratization process, suitable protection of human rights, the rule of law, the establishment of a market economy and the

unhindered return of refugees and displaced persons, especially in regions where they were members of minority groups, continue to be of serious concern for the European Union.

The survival of a State depends essentially on the effective functioning of its institutions. The European Union hopes that those in charge in the central authorities and the entities, whether Bosnian, Croat or Serb, will cooperate fully with each other and with the international community.

In recent months the Republika Srpska has been going through a regrettable political crisis. The legislative elections held on 22 and 23 November this year should give the institutions of this entity a chance to make a fresh start towards a policy of cooperation in the framework of the peace process.

General elections are due to be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1998. The OSCE must play a role in these elections, which will mark a new and important stage in the country's democratization process. Further efforts are needed to establish a permanent electoral system.

To this end, the reform of the media must be completed so that they can operate in a democratic and pluralist manner. Finally, the multi-ethnicity of the parties needs to be developed.

The European Union is concerned by the fact that the central Government in Bosnia and Herzegovina operates without any organic law, secretariat or fixed headquarters. The Assembly has met only five times since its election last year. The central budget is not funded by the entities, which withhold customs revenues or do not collect them. Large sums are being managed without the necessary transparency and outside the legal process. Bosnia and Herzegovina still has neither a flag nor a common currency.

The European Union wishes to reaffirm that it will not tolerate attempts within the entities to undermine the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nor will it tolerate attempts by any group to dominate the political institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We call on all parties to work together to ensure full respect for the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in particular to ensure that governmental structures at all levels become fully operational.

The return of the refugees and displaced persons remains a priority. Although freedom of movement between and within the entities has improved, much remains to be done to guarantee the free circulation of people and goods in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A very large number of refugees have still not returned home for fear of acts of intimidation and violence. Measures must be taken immediately to put an end to such acts. Furthermore, urgent administrative and legal measures must be taken by all parties concerned to allow the return of refugees and displaced persons, including to areas where they were members of minority groups, and their reintegration into their community of origin in conditions of safety and dignity, including full observance of their property rights.

The European Union reaffirms that full respect for human rights and the rights of minorities is closely linked to the restoration of a truly multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Moreover, we fully support the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, which continues to be an essential tool for national reconciliation once persons responsible for war crimes have been arrested and sentenced. Although there has been some progress in terms of cooperation with the Tribunal, it is still not enough. The European Union recalls that as long as persons who have been indicted are not handed over to the International Tribunal, the prerequisites for reconciliation and the rule of law in Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be met.

The European Union would like to remind neighbouring countries of their obligations under the Peace Agreement. These obligations must be met in full, voluntarily and immediately.

The Peace Implementation Council met at Bonn on 9 and 10 December this year to study progress since the London Conference of 4 and 5 December 1996 and the Sintra Ministerial Meeting on 30 May 1997. The European Union welcomes the convening of the Bonn Conference and fully supports its conclusions. The European Union hopes that the impetus provided by that Conference will be decisive for the peace process and that it will be complemented by the full cooperation of all parties concerned.

We also support the High Representative in the difficult discharge of his duties. His work, as well as that of the international community, remains indispensable in

the foreseeable future. Our ultimate aim is still to see Bosnia and Herzegovina with an impartial administration and finally able to govern itself and to live within borders respected by its neighbours.

The European Union recalls that in Sintra and Bonn, the High Representative was given the task of ensuring observance of the deadlines for the implementation of specific obligations and that of taking measures in the event of failure to respect those obligations. The European Union welcomes the intention of the High Representative to make full use of his authority to ensure progress in achieving these goals.

We have indicated on several occasions, and at the highest level, our determination to contribute by all available means to the consolidation of peace and stability in the region. The European Union is in a position to make a special contribution to the process of stabilization and economic renewal by encouraging the development of relations with all countries of the region in a framework that is conducive to democracy, the rule of law, high standards of human and minority rights and a transition to a market economy. The establishment of an economy based on free trade will enable Bosnia and Herzegovina to reduce its dependence on international aid.

In the framework of its regional aid, the European Union recalls that the continuation of international assistance is linked to full respect by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the neighbouring States for the Peace Agreement and their obligations under it.

Peace is not merely the absence of war. In the interest of future generations, lasting peace must be rebuilt, above all, in people's minds. The desire for national reconciliation in a spirit of justice and respect for law must be made to prevail over the thirst for revenge and narrow sectarianism. Such is the task awaiting all those who are devoting themselves to the delicate and constantly threatened task of restoring peace and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): Two years have passed since the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed. During this period the ceasefire has been firmly maintained, due primarily to the presence of the Stabilization Force. The citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina have to a certain degree resumed their everyday lives, thanks in large part to the assistance provided by the international community.

While Japan appreciates these positive factors and developments, we cannot but recognize that progress in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, particularly in its civilian aspects, has not kept pace with the expectations of the international community, or, for that matter, those of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina themselves. The common institutions that are supposed to govern Bosnia and Herzegovina as a single State have been formally established, but they are not yet functioning as initially envisaged due to various impediments set up by one party or another.

We are aware, of course, that a desire for renewed multi-ethnic coexistence and inter-ethnic cooperation has been increasing among the citizens. Regrettably, however, the behaviour of the leaders of the three main ethnic groups and of the two entities has tended to thwart, rather than encourage, that desire.

Indeed, Japan is concerned that neither entity has demonstrated through concrete actions sufficient commitment to ethnic reconciliation and the rebuilding of a multi-ethnic society. The Serb leaders show separatist inclinations, remaining uncooperative with regard to the apprehension of war-crime suspects, media reform and several other crucial issues. My delegation calls upon them to provide concrete proof of their commitment to the peace process.

The Croat leaders also display separatist tendencies from time to time, as in their non-compliance with the results of the municipal elections in Mostar and Žepče. We call upon them to reaffirm their commitment not only to preserve but to vitalize the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As for the Bosniac leaders, my delegation urges them to cooperate in sharing power under the central authorities with the other ethnic groups in order to facilitate the functioning of common institutions.

I should like to emphasize in this regard the importance of the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December. All the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina must make maximum efforts to fulfil their obligations, as outlined in those conclusions, so as to substantially expedite the peace process. My delegation wishes to stress that primary responsibility for the peace process lies with the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina themselves. International support depends upon

cooperation and actions by the parties on the ground to advance that process.

I should like to conclude my remarks by expressing the Government of Japan's deep appreciation to all the countries and international institutions that are engaged in the noble and difficult tasks, both civilian and military, that are required for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. In particular, I wish to pay tribute to the High Representative, Mr. Carlos Westendorp, as well as to the Stabilization Force, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the International Police Task Force. Truly, the services they are rendering in Bosnia and Herzegovina are services rendered to the international community as a whole.

Mr. Narzuki (Malaysia): My delegation is gratified that progress continues to be made towards consolidating peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. During the past 12 months many important achievements have been made. Armed hostilities have ceased and peace is holding ground. The implementation of the military aspects of the peace accords has been successful in large part because of the strong presence of the multinational forces. This in turn has made possible the implementation of the action plan for the civilian consolidation period agreed to at the London ministerial meeting in December 1996 and in the Sintra Declaration last May. Efforts towards building a unified, multi-ethnic, multicultural and multireligious Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized boundaries have begun to take root, however slowly. Important common State institutions, such as the national Parliament, the joint Presidency and the Council of Ministers have been formed, and the results of the last municipal elections should lead to new ethnic alliances in many municipal assemblies.

Despite these achievements, the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains fragile and fraught with difficulties. Obstacles continue to impede the full implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Mutual mistrust and animosity among the different ethnic groups continue to obstruct efforts towards achieving the ultimate goal of making peace irreversible. The Bosnian entities must realize that there is no viable alternative to the Peace Agreement as the foundation for building lasting peace and prosperity in a multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, the establishment of common State institutions is fundamental in ensuring a stable and functional Government. Although some of these common institutions have been established, their effective functioning has been impeded by the frequent absence of the Serb members. It is imperative that all the concerned parties honour their commitment to ensure that all joint State institutions are duly constituted and able to function efficiently and effectively and enjoy the support and confidence of the three constituent peoples. No attempts should be made to erode the powers and responsibilities of the State.

Malaysia believes that the consolidation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is contingent upon the presence of a safe and secure environment, freedom of movement and the respect for basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. All citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be free to move anywhere in the country, without fear of harassment or intimidation. Refugees and displaced persons must be allowed to return freely to their homes in safety and dignity. We are concerned that only a quarter of the estimated 2 million refugees and displaced persons have returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina, mostly to areas in which they belong to the ethnic majority. Returns of minority members have been disappointingly limited due to continued political, security and administrative obstacles. We call upon all concerned to ensure that Bosnian displaced persons are able return to their homes without fear and that their human rights are respected and upheld. This is critical to the revival of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the success of the democratization process.

The attainment of a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be based on the rule of law and the meting out of full justice. In this regard, the perpetrators of crimes against humanity committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be held accountable for their past actions before the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, in The Hague.

The victims of genocide and "ethnic cleansing" should not be denied justice. We are, however, concerned that many of the indicted war criminals, including Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić, are still at large and free to carry out their activities with impunity. More disturbing is the fact that Karadžić and Mladic continue to exercise political influence in the Serb entity. Their continued freedom constitutes a major hindrance to the creation of a unified Bosnia and Herzegovina. We therefore demand their immediate arrest and trial. The role of the multinational forces is crucial in ensuring their arrest. In this respect, we wish to commend the courageous efforts of the British forces

in apprehending an indicted war criminal in the Serb territory last July. Such cooperation between the Stabilization Force and the Tribunal should be continued and further enhanced in the interest of ensuring that justice is done.

Thanks to the strong presence of the multinational peacekeeping force, relative peace and security have been maintained over the past two years. Its presence has significantly helped to create a conducive environment for the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement. It is important, therefore, that this very significant achievement is not only maintained but further consolidated. In this respect, Malaysia believes that the further presence of an international force after the expiry of the Stabilization Force's mandate in June 1998 is necessary.

We wish to take this opportunity to commend the role played by the courageous men and women from various nations serving in the Stabilization Force and the United Nations International Police Task Force, and others who have contributed so significantly to the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would also like to offer our sincere condolences to the families of those who have sacrificed their lives for peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially to the bereaved families of the 12 dedicated officers who were tragically killed in a helicopter crash last September.

Much remains to be done in respect of the reconstruction and economic-recovery programmes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While the international community will no doubt continue to render the necessary assistance, the Bosnians themselves will have to play a major part in undertaking reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes that would generate economic activities, attract foreign investment and create job opportunities. Malaysia will continue to contribute towards the Bosnian reconstruction effort. We contributed $12.1 million in 1996, and a further $12 million has been pledged for 1997 to the reconstruction programme. Among the areas at which we are seriously looking is the development of small- and medium-scale industries. As part of our contribution for 1997, we have set aside a sum of $3 million to establish a credit fund in Sarajevo to be made available to Bosnian small- and medium-scale industries. We hope this will supplement similar schemes that are already in place in Bosnia.

At the same time, we are working closely with the Bosnians and other concerned friends of Bosnia on a project aimed at building confidence and promoting reconciliation among the Bosnians at all levels. This proposal, which was first made by the Malaysian Foreign Minister when he addressed the Assembly in September and which he made again at the Ministerial Meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in October, was welcomed by the recent Peace Implementation Conference at Bonn. The proposal involves the organization of a series of workshops or forums with the participation of a number of Bosnian groups and individuals, as well as outside experts and facilitators. These workshops, or forums, are designed to provide the various parties and groups in Bosnia with a forum for dialogue and consultation to enhance awareness of the absolute indispensability of cooperating to secure peace and development, to promote inter-ethnic and interreligious harmony and to foster inter-ethnic and interfaith understanding and cooperation among the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that Malaysia, with its unique multi-ethnic, multilingual and multireligious background and experience in nation-building, can help make a positive contribution in this area. Since our aim is to supplement, and not to overlook, existing efforts, this project will be undertaken with support from and in cooperation with various quarters within Bosnia and Herzegovina, from other countries and from among the relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

The success of all these activities aimed at establishing a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is dependent on the full implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially its civilian component. Thus, it is important that the international community continue to manifest its commitment to this objective. However, the main responsibility for carrying out the tasks ahead lies with the Bosnian authorities. Only when the Bosnian parties themselves begin seriously to fulfil their commitment under the Peace Accords, through the effective functioning of their common State institutions, will the peace process become irreversible. At the same time, a durable peace cannot be achieved in Bosnia and Herzegovina without the full cooperation of its neighbours. It is therefore important for Bosnia's neighbours to commit themselves to the full implementation of the relevant provisions of the Dayton Peace Agreement.

Mr. Galuška (Czech Republic): Although the Czech Republic, as an associated country, endorsed the statement of the European Union presented by the representative of Luxembourg, I would like to make a few additional comments on this point. The reason is that

the situation in the former Yugoslavia, specifically in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is a long-term priority of Czech foreign policy, reflected in our intensive political, military, material and financial support for all efforts to bring stability to the region. For the same reason, we have decided to join the sponsors of the draft resolution before us. We feel it is well balanced and focused on achieving progress, which in particular is so badly needed in the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Agreement.

The Czech Republic supports a united Bosnia and Herzegovina based on the principle of single citizenship. However, it recognizes that Bosnia and Herzegovina now consists of two entities: the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Republika Srpska. We feel that the two entities and the three ethnic groups must be aware of the advantages of mutual cooperation.

We expected that the forming of a Bosnian Government and the constituent session of the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina would activate common Bosnian institutions. However, the actual progress has been inadequate. We think that the major reason is the lack of political will on all sides. The internal development in Republika Srpska is characterized by a growing rift between the supporters of the two competing parties. The parliamentary elections in November, no matter how effectively they demonstrated the prevailing desire for the democratization of the society, did not mark a turning point in the effort to build an independent, united and multi-ethnic State. In this context, I would like to say that I fully agree with those who have spoken before me who appreciated the tremendous performance of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Stabilization Force (SFOR) and other personnel in organizing and supervising the elections.

It is beyond all doubt that a consistent implementation of all articles of the Dayton Agreement is crucial to the prospects for a normally functioning, democratic State capable of ensuring the basic social, legal, security and other conditions for everybody. The Czech Republic therefore fully agrees with the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held at Bonn a couple of days ago, which, *inter alia*, reaffirmed that the international community must continue to work towards the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, in particular of its civilian aspects. While the military aspects of the Dayton Agreement are almost fully in place, much remains to be done for the civilian aspects, despite the recent moderate progress. The urgent problems include the return of refugees, freedom of movement and the efficiency of local police forces. A sine qua non in this context is an early understanding between the leaders of both entities on full implementation of the constitutional provisions which they have endorsed. For this reason, the Czech Republic wholeheartedly supports an extended mandate for the High Representative with a view to effective and expedited implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton Agreement. The Peace Implementation Conference was a clear signal that the international community wants to see concrete results and that these results will be reflected in, among other things, the volume of international aid.

The International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia has an essential role in dealing with the consequences of the war. The Czech Republic reaffirms its unfailing support for this mechanism for investigation and punishment of war crimes, which is essential to the moral renewal of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to boosting the population's confidence in the international community.

The economic reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a challenge to the international community. We should bear in mind that international aid should flow to all parts of the country, including the Republika Srpska. The Czech Republic has to date contributed to the international reconstruction efforts in proportion to its own capacities. It has provided development aid totalling $3 million, and additional allocations are planned for 1998.

Judging from the current developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one cannot abandon this country in the summer of 1998. We therefore maintain that the presence in the country of multinational armed forces led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) must continue after the mandate of SFOR expires next June. This being the case, the Czech Republic — a country which has contributed troops to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO), the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), the Implementation Force (IFOR) and SFOR — stands ready to contribute a contingent to the new operation as soon as the appropriate political decision is made by the NATO Council and the mandate for the operation is approved by the United Nations Security Council.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): Two years ago the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed. This Agreement put an end to a senseless and fratricidal war in Bosnia and brought a real hope for durable peace in the entire region.

While entering the third year of the implementation of the Peace Agreement and the last phase of the consolidation period, we should not only review the progress that has been achieved by the parties over the last year but also look for ways to remove present challenges and prevent future ones.

The delegation of Ukraine notes with satisfaction that, due to the continuous assistance from the international community, the peace process in Bosnia has taken deep root.

Over the past year we have witnessed a number of important and praiseworthy steps made with the purpose of consolidating Bosnia and Herzegovina as a united, sovereign and politically independent State with internationally recognized borders and of maintaining its multi-ethnic and multicultural nature.

We also welcome the adoption of the political declaration by the Ministerial Meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council in Sintra on 30 May this year. As a member of the Council, Ukraine fully endorses the conclusions spelt out in the final document of the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference held just a few days ago.

Although the long-awaited peace has finally returned to war-torn Bosnia and notable progress in implementing the Peace Agreement can be widely observed, the causes and consequences of the war have yet to be completely removed. In this regard, my delegation shares the view that the peace Stabilization Force (SFOR) established by Security Council resolution 1088 (1996) continues to be a decisive element in securing the first results of the ongoing process of reconciliation and State-building in Bosnia, as well as contributing to the stabilization of the situation in the Balkans. A recent example of the SFOR deterrent factor might be the situation that emerged in Bosnia last summer, when the whole peace process in the broader region was seriously challenged by a deep political crisis in the Republika Srpska.

In this regard, Ukraine maintains the view that a reasonable level of international military presence is still greatly required as a stabilizing factor in Bosnia. It is also needed for further maintenance of overall European security. That is why Ukraine is in favour of a continued military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina beyond June 1998. With this in mind, as a troop-contributing country to the former United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and Implementation Force (IFOR) and the current SFOR operation, my country stands ready to extend its participation in a feasible post-SFOR operation to be mandated by the United Nations Security Council.

My delegation is convinced that the role of the United Nations in the process of reconciliation and civilian consolidation in Bosnia remains indispensable. At the same time, inasmuch as further success in implementing the Peace Agreement largely depends on the fulfilment of its civilian aspects, the United Nations role in the solution of the humanitarian problems should be increased. In our view, the issues of demining, economic reconstruction, human rights, return of refugees and the enforcement of law are of special importance. The proper coordination of humanitarian efforts between the United Nations bodies in the field and all the other international structures involved, including the Office of the High Representative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Committee of the Red Cross, non-governmental organizations and others, as well as between SFOR and the International Police Task Force, will be extremely helpful to this end.

Demining still presents one of the serious obstacles hampering the effective implementation of the civilian aspects of the Agreement. There is no doubt that the solution of this problem will effectively contribute to the return of refugees, to increasing freedom of movement and to the economic reconstruction of the whole country. In this regard, we commend the activities of the Mine Action Centre, which, in our view, should receive more international support and adequate funding. In this context, I would also like to welcome the signing of the memorandum of understanding on the United Nations mine-action plan between the United Nations and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina in October this year. This will ensure that further demining programmes that have been agreed to are properly carried out.

The final success of the peace process in Bosnia will hardly be achievable unless it is supported by effective economic reconstruction in the country with the continued assistance of the international donor community.

Top priority should be given to the projects aimed at promoting economic cooperation between the Federation and the Republika Srpska, as well as within the Federation itself. First of all, they should provide for the development of common transport and energy systems and for the construction of settlements for refugees and displaced persons. Both multi-ethnic entities and the three constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with all other peoples residing in the country, should equally enjoy the advantages of economic recovery, including international financial aid.

In this context, I wish to reiterate the well-known position of Ukraine on its participation in this process. We are convinced that countries, including my own, that had the most serious economic losses as a result of the sanctions regime imposed by the Security Council against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia should be assisted in getting priority access to the reconstruction projects currently under way. Such assistance would be considered partial compensation for our tremendous economic losses.

A concrete step in that direction, for instance, would be the decision by the next donor conference to introduce preferential conditions for a complex plan of cooperation between Ukraine and Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to this plan, recently adopted by the Ukrainian Government, Ukraine can provide its wide range of expertise in various fields of civil construction, energy-sector restoration and revival of agriculture.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of the establishment of an effective mechanism for overcoming the adverse consequences for countries that comply with the collective measures undertaken on behalf of the entire United Nations. Mindful of this, my delegation, under agenda item 20 (b), has put forward at this session a prospective draft resolution that has already enjoyed endorsement by a number of Member States. We hope that this draft resolution, which is to be introduced tomorrow, will be adopted by consensus and, further on, will be fully implemented.

In conclusion, let me join previous speakers who have stated that lasting peace and reconciliation in Bosnia will become a reality only with the full implementation of the Peace Agreement by the parties themselves, since it is they who bear the main responsibility for the destiny of their country.

In this vein, I should like to refer to the view recently expressed by the High Representative, Mr. Carlos Westendorp. He said that much has been done in Bosnia over the past two years, but that the efforts have to be continued. If the Peace Agreement is implemented, the country and the whole region will have a future. Should this not happen, there will be no future at all. Ukraine fully shares this opinion.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to express my delegation's appreciation, Sir, for your successful efforts in guiding the work of the General Assembly at its fifty-second regular session.

For two years now, Bosnia and Herzegovina has enjoyed an absence of bloodshed. As a result, certain positive developments have taken place: the mutual recognition of all successor States to the former Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and the successful conduct of presidential and municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1996 and this year, although the results of the most recent election have yet to be implemented. The authors and sponsors of the draft resolution before the Assembly have taken note of and welcomed the efforts of the States and parties concerned, and those of other international actors who have played a role in bringing about a very difficult transformation from war to peace.

Unfortunately, however, it has been a transformation from a bitter war to a bitter peace. The task of establishing common federal institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still proving to be very difficult, primarily because of Pale's attitude — an attitude that is totally unacceptable. The Bosnian Serb leaders in Pale simply do not recognize the legitimacy of any institution that confirms the unitary nature of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their behaviour at the Bonn Conference last week also demonstrates that, once again, little has changed in their uncompromising attitude towards the international community.

The Dayton Agreement will never lead to real peace until its very heart — namely, annex 7 — is implemented in full and those refugees and persons displaced from minority areas return to their original home towns. My delegation joins others in urging all the parties, especially the Bosnian Serbs, to implement annex 7 in full and in good faith.

Mr. Zacharakis (Greece), Vice-President, took the Chair.

To facilitate this, my delegation adds its voice to those of others who appeal to all parties to cooperate with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, in accordance with Security Council Resolutions 827 (1993) of 25 May 1993 and 1022 (1995) of 22 November 1995. The accused war criminals must appear before the Tribunal in The Hague to answer the charges levelled against them. Their appalling crimes cannot under any circumstances be forgotten or forgiven by the rest of the world.

In this context, in July 1995, some 8,000 Bosnian men from Srebrenica were separated from their families by the Bosnian Serb military and subsequently disappeared. It is now widely suspected that they were executed by their captors. We can only assume this because, despite forensic and other evidence that has become available, the Bosnian Serb leadership has never offered a formal explanation for what occurred to these men from Srebrenica. If they were not massacred, where are they now? What has happened to them?

From early in the war, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has hosted refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and deployed peacekeepers to Bosnia: first with the United Nations Protection Force and, presently, with the Stabilization Force and the International Police Task Force. Jordan has always been wholly committed to an independent, unitary and multiethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. My delegation therefore finds recent media speculation over the idea of partition dangerous, highly unethical and, of course, totally unacceptable.

Mr. Kamal (Pakistan): In December 1995, the international community welcomed the conclusion of the Dayton Agreement. It was a victory for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina as they took an historic and courageous decision for peace by abandoning the course of violence, destruction and war. The inhabitants of the war-ravaged country saw a gleam of light and hope as their leaders showed wisdom in choosing a path of reconciliation, harmony and amity. The journey ahead was fraught with obstacles, considering the deep fissures and cleavages caused to the very fabric of the society by four years of fratricidal war. An enormous amount of determination was required on the part of the leadership and the people of the multiethnic and multicultural society of Bosnia and Herzegovina to overcome these obstacles.

During the last two years, while important strides have been taken towards resurrecting the unity and territorial integrity of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there continues to be deep anxiety and concern over the complete and impartial implementation of the Dayton peace agreement. The consequences of genocide and "ethnic cleansing" have yet to be undone. The vision of a united multiethnic and multicultural State of Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized boundaries and with fully functional national institutions continues to face significant impediments.

The provisions of the Dayton Agreement are central to preserving Bosnia and Herzegovina as a united, sovereign and independent State. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has throughout been forthcoming in fulfilling its obligations without any equivocation. Unfortunately, the Serbian entity has demonstrated a lack of commitment at every stage and phase of the peace process, seriously hampering international efforts.

My delegation is particularly concerned at the lack of progress in a number of areas, including the return of all refugees and displaced persons, as well as the freedom of movement across the inter-entity boundary lines. The return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes in conditions of security and honour is essential for keeping the peace process on track. This is, indeed, a critical component of the Dayton Agreement and the only way to ensure the full revival of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized borders. We support the proposal, made by the High Representative in his recent report, that limited international reconstruction funds be made available for offering rewards to the municipalities which support the peace process and to withdraw funds from non-compliant municipalities. This is a move in the right direction.

The solemn commitment made at Dayton must be complied with to ensure proper criminal proceedings against the war criminals. If speedy justice is to be ensured, States must help in apprehending the indicted criminals. The international community must ensure the full and timely implementation of all aspects of the arrangements agreed to by the parties. The Bonn Peace Implementation Conference last week rightly pointed out the failure on the part of Republika Srpska and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to cooperate with the International Tribunal in surrendering the indicted war criminals.

It is a matter of deep disappointment for Pakistan that the ideal of peace with justice for Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be defeated, especially by delays in the prosecution and punishment of those indicted for crimes against humanity in the territory of

the former Yugoslavia. The work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia continues to be undermined by a chronic shortage of necessary funds and resources. Voluntary contributions essential for supporting the noble work of this Tribunal have, regrettably, not been forthcoming.

Pakistan has consistently provided moral and financial support to the Tribunal. We have so far contributed one million dollars out of the total contribution of $8.6 million received by the Tribunal. We urge all Member States to contribute generously to the Tribunal's Voluntary Fund to enable it to carry out its functions and responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

There is no doubt that the establishment of a lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina depends on the effective functioning of the common State structure. The joint Bosnian State institutions should be enabled to function for the collective benefit of the Bosnian people. It is unfortunate that the work of the Presidency, the Council of Ministers and the parliamentary assembly continues to be ineffective owing to lack of cooperation from the Serb members.

The Serbs also continue to evade their obligations under the Agreement on Regional Stabilization and the Agreement on Subregional Arms Control with the clear purpose of pursing their secessionist policies. These arrangements are vital for ensuring regional stability. All States, particularly the Serbian entity, must ensure completion of declared reduction liabilities and implementation of other related obligations.

The presence of the Implementation Force (IFOR) and the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a vital factor in ensuring relative security in the region since the signing of the Peace Agreement. We support their continued presence providing a secure environment for implementation of the civilian aspect of the peace plan. In this regard, we also welcome the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) plans to consider options for a multinational follow-on force to SFOR to support the implementation of the civilian aspect beyond June 1998.

The revival of Bosnia's economic and social infrastructure, which was destroyed by years of war, also requires priority attention and the sustained commitment of the international community. We support international efforts to rebuild Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is important that disbursement of international economic assistance to various parties be linked to their compliance with the Dayton Accord, and in particular to their commitment to the integrity and the unity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Pakistan has extended substantial financial, technical and material support to Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a token of our political solidarity with our Bosnian brothers. We are implementing a programme for training 200 Bosnian military personnel.

In its capacity as Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Assistance Mobilization Group for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Pakistan is pleased to inform the Assembly that the OIC member States have continued to translate their political commitment to the unity, territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina through concrete action. This has taken the shape of various forms of bilateral assistance and contributions at the international pledging conferences, as well as establishing a nexus with regional organizations and mechanisms entrusted with the implementation of the Dayton peace process.

Pakistan has consistently adopted a principled position throughout the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has extended unqualified moral and political support to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our support reflects our conviction that no nation should be victimized because of its smaller size and that no peoples should be brutalized because of their ethnic origin. We also believe that no nation and no people should be denied their inherent right to self-determination and their right to wage a legitimate struggle for their liberation.

We would like to take this opportunity to assure our Bosnian brethren of our fullest support in their efforts and endeavours to overcome the formidable problems that face their country and people. We are confident that Bosnia and Herzegovina will have the resilience and strength to overcome these problems. We would also urge the international community to leave no stone unturned in ensuring the realization of the dream of a sovereign, united, multi-ethnic, multicultural State of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at peace with itself and contributing to international peace and prosperity.

The draft resolution before the Assembly today embodies the principles which set forth the minimum that must be accomplished by the international community if there is to be a just and lasting peace settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Pakistan is a co-sponsor of that draft

resolution and earnestly hopes that all Member States will support its adoption without a vote.

Mr. Šimonović (Croatia): Having been a delegate at the Dayton/Paris peace talks, which is the framework for our discussion today, allow me to begin by recalling the key, but sometimes forgotten or misinterpreted, elements of the Peace Agreement.

The Peace Agreement attempted to reconcile the new reality on the ground with the conflicting interests among the relevant parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The innovative institutional design of a new Bosnia and Herzegovina was founded on four principles: first, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a single internationally recognized State; secondly, the State is decentralized; thirdly, it is made up of two multi-ethnic entities; and fourthly, it ensures the equality of its three constituent nations.

While far from being ideal, this Dayton/Paris model was seen as the only viable solution, and in fact it still is. The problems that arise in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be attributed more or less to deviations from these four pillars of the Peace Agreement. The slow progress in building new common institutions, combined with attempts to strengthen certain old centralized institutions, is one such problem.

As one of the signatories of the Peace Agreement, Croatia is closely following its evolution. Moves towards centralization of Bosnia and Herzegovina, if pushed beyond the Dayton/Paris limits, could be destabilizing not only for Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also for its neighbours. Disregard for the existing national and local customs and way of life necessarily leads to increasing polarization, ambitions for secession and large-scale migrations.

Croatia is particularly concerned about population shifts onto its territory, not only of Croats, but also of other distressed groups that bring with them security problems and economic costs. Allow me to remind you that, over the past five years, Croatia has spent $1.1 billion for the care of Bosnian refugees, which is an enormous amount for a country our size and cannot be sustained.

My country became a signatory of the Peace Agreement as a result of the preceding Washington agreements which, through Croatia and its subsequent actions in 1995, created a balance of power in Bosnia and Herzegovina that made the Dayton/Paris accords possible. This balance of power remains crucial to peace and stability in the region.

The institutionalized relationship between Croatia and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is also critical to Croatia's short and long-term security needs. In the past, as we have mentioned, Croatia paid a heavy price for population shifts from Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as for terrorist and other actions originating from or tied to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

One month ago today, on 15 November, His Holiness John Paul II made an appeal to the international community to give due recognition to the plight of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Pope stressed that their desire to have their identity, way of life and equal rights protected is a legitimate one. His appeal came in view of the increasing amount of evidence about their displacement and marginalization in political life. Since the Washington agreements, the Bosnian-Herzegovene Croats have been leaving the country in substantial numbers. Those who have stayed, and a small number who have returned, have suffered from a growing number of ethnically motivated murders, terrorist acts, the destruction of private and community property, and physical offenses.

Croatia is increasingly burdened with the alienation of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their loss of confidence in the Dayton/Paris accords and the international community in general should not be taken lightly because they happen to be the smallest of the three constituent nations. The international community often points out that the key to the reintegration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into a multi-ethnic State lies with the return of Croats to central Bosnia and Posavina. While this is undeniably true, the international community's concrete support for Bosnian Croats has not been sufficient.

We believe that the international community can take stronger steps in Bosnia and Herzegovina in this regard. One critical area for assistance is in the domain of media, where Croatian-language television and radio programmes are permitted only on the local level in the southern parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The disillusionment of the Bosnian-Herzegovene Croats is also due to the developments at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, where, because of the lack of cooperation of two parties, and the lack of determination among others to make those parties cooperate, Croats now account for 70 percent of the imprisoned indictees. This proportion is outright unacceptable. The Bosnian-Herzegovene Croats are even more distressed by the lack of indictments against persons

who organized and committed mass murder against their communities in central Bosnia, for which there is ample evidence and documentation.

During the discussions on the text of the draft resolution before us today, my delegation had proposed a number of amendments that would reinforce some of the pillars of the Peace Agreement. One is reflected in the third preambular paragraph, in which the General Assembly reaffirms its support for equality of the three constituent nations of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The other is included in operative paragraph 7, in which the General Assembly calls for the provision of assistance to meet the infrastructural needs of the new common institutions. We are pleased that they were accepted and hope that they will add to the objective of this draft resolution — the objective of a stable and equitable Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Hashim (Brunei Darussalam): Our debate today allows us to review the overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Dayton peace accord has presented many opportunities and a number of challenges to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As envisaged by the Dayton peace accord and as a result of actions taken by the international community through the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the onset of peace, however fragile, has allowed positive developments to take place. The task of achieving this has not been easy. We would therefore like to acknowledge the contribution of the international community, particularly NATO, in establishing the productive political climate which currently prevails in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Nevertheless, Brunei Darussalam joins others in reaffirming its belief that lasting peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be achieved only through the full implementation of the Dayton peace accord, and we note that important aspects of the accord have yet to be fully implemented.

An understandable concern of the international community is the question of the indicted war criminals. We note that though a number of them have been brought before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague, many of the accused leaders still remain at large. As long as these people are not brought to justice, a lasting peace in the country will be difficult to achieve. They still have substantial influence in resisting efforts to promote further political stability in the country. We strongly support all efforts to bring these people to justice.

A further aspect of the overall situation, of course, is the problem of the proper return of refugees and displaced persons. Although a considerable number have returned to Bosnia, many of them are still homeless and have been prevented from returning to their former places of residence. We see this as being a very long and difficult task and its successful resolution as an essential part of any lasting peace in the country.

Having thus indicated some of our feelings on the item under consideration, may I say that Brunei Darussalam is glad to be able to contribute towards international efforts. We are of the view that these should be strongly complemented by similar efforts on the part of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who have the final responsibility for peace, unity and development in the country.

In this regard, we hope that the international community will maintain its presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and continue to exert its influence. Important tasks lie ahead of it if we are to see continued progress in the implementation of the Dayton Agreement, and we offer maximum support to the Bosnian people in their efforts to create a climate of confidence in a united Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Eitel (Germany): Let me express my gratitude for this welcome occasion to address the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is of primary concern to Germany and of crucial importance for peace and stability in Europe as a whole. The needless pain and suffering that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, regardless of their ethnicity, have endured and are still enduring is fresh and vivid in our memory.

Let me also affirm that Germany fully supports and subscribes to the intervention that the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, Ambassador Wolzfeld, has made on behalf of the European Union.

Only a few days ago, on 9 and 10 December 1997, Germany hosted and chaired the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference for Bosnia and Herzegovina, under the motto "Self-sustaining structures", and with the participation not only of the parties and of a very large number of other States, but also of numerous international organizations engaged in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Among these, of course, was the Secretariat of the United Nations. The Conference highlighted the degree of concern and determination with which the international community wants to see lasting

peace and reconciliation take root. Equally important was the unity with which the international community supported not only that goal, but also the means to be used to reach it.

The extensive conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference in Bonn are more detailed and action-oriented than earlier conference results. They map out the concrete steps to be taken by the parties, with the assistance — and sometimes the insistence — of the international community, in the third year after the Peace Agreement. The 10 chapters of this document deal with all relevant aspects of the peace process: human rights, legal reform and war crimes; constitutional and legal matters; refugees and displaced persons; public order and police issues; media; elections; economic reconstruction and reform; Brčko; security and arms control; regional aspects; and the High Representative.

In addition, the conclusions put the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina into its regional perspective. They contain provisions addressing the return of refugees of Serb nationality, Eastern Slavonia and Kosovo. We shall be requesting the Secretary-General to issue the Bonn conclusions as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

Let me sum up the thrust of the results of the Bonn Conference in a few words: the Peace Agreement remains the blueprint for peace and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In a great effort, the foundations have been laid and the essential structures have been built. The house of a stable and peaceful Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, can be completed only if all those living in the country — Bosniacs, Croats and Serbs — join in its construction. To this end, the international community will take an even more robust stance. The Conference has broadened the competence of the High Representative to impose decisions if the parties are unable to take them themselves.

There will be no lack of international assistance and solidarity. But assistance will be given only to those who actively engage and cooperate, and who are ready for reconciliation and a common future. Those who block and sabotage, who harbour indicted war criminals, who hinder refugees and displaced persons from returning, who incite hatred and strife, cannot expect our help. The immediate neighbours of Bosnia and Herzegovina too must assist in this endeavour. They renewed that commitment in Bonn, and they will be held to their word.

That is the message that the international community sent from the Bonn Peace Implementation Conference. I am gratified to see that this message has been picked up and strengthened in the draft resolution that is before the Assembly today. In paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1, the General Assembly would welcome the conclusions of the Conference and would call upon all parties to implement them fully. I am confident that the entire United Nations community will adopt this message by consensus. I am convinced that this will not fail to make its impression on the parties, and also on the suffering people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Frdös (Hungary) (*interpretation from French*): Hungary fully associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

The situation that arose in Bosnia and Herzegovina presented the international community with one of its greatest challenges since the great political changes that took place in the world. The crisis in the former Yugoslavia, of which the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the most calamitous element, has become synonymous with the bitter disappointment and trauma that continue to haunt us today.

The Dayton peace process has yet to produce all the expected results. Now that the military provisions of the Dayton Agreement are being implemented, it is urgent to address the task of consolidating what has been achieved and of implementing the civilian side of the agreement on a priority basis. We are glad to see that peace is being consolidated in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but it also clear that the process has not yet become irreversible. The establishment of a multiethnic and multicultural Bosnia and Herzegovina requires the unconditional implementation of all the provisions of the Dayton Agreement and, in the current circumstances, a continued international military presence.

In that context, we welcome the recent Bonn Peace Implementation Conference, which highlighted the remaining tasks, such as ensuring the effective functioning of joint institutions, the strengthening of trust and cooperation among the three peoples that make up Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the importance of the administration of justice and of respect for human rights.

It is important to spend a moment on the problem of securing full cooperation with the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious

Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 and with respect to bringing war criminals to justice. We greatly regret that the fulfilment of commitments to that end — commitments based upon the Dayton Agreement — has not been viewed equally by the various ethnic communities as an unambiguous obligation. We must therefore ensure that the Tribunal has the financial resources it needs to carry out its tasks, and that it has access to all the information that is so vital for arriving at objective and balanced positions.

It is important also to mention the question of the return of refugees and displaced persons. Respect for minority rights, under international norms, is a part of this and a fundamental element of reconciliation, especially given the recent surge in ethnic intolerance throughout the country. Let me quote Ambassador Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who said in a statement on Human Rights Day that

Spoke in English.

"Diversity is richness, not a threat. It should be enjoyed, not despised".

Spoke in French.

That comment sends a very important message and should guide not only the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina and populations throughout the former Yugoslavia, but the entire region of Central and Eastern Europe, so that there will be no repetition of the tragedies of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of Croatia.

The objective of the entire Dayton process, in spite of the efforts of those who would sabotage and undermine it, is to ensure the independence and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina in democracy and to preserve the unity and the legal and territorial integrity of that multi-ethnic country. In that context, the reconstruction and economic revival of Bosnia and Herzegovina are a sine qua non for the achievement of the objectives the international community has set itself in this country.

In the present conditions, it is obvious that this can be assured only through the continuation of international aid. That said, we share the point of view of those who make a direct link between supplying such assistance and the degree of cooperation with the international community shown by the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, the consolidation of the results of the last two years depends above all on the attitude of the Bosnian parties themselves.

All those who have been following developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina know very well that the international community has made a major political investment in it. We can only reiterate the European Union's declaration that neither attempts to undermine Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty nor attempts at unilateral domination over the political institutions of that country will be tolerated. Regardless of the views that any side may have regarding the events of the last few years in the former Yugoslav region, and regardless of the attitude of any side towards the methods used by the international community in dealing with this conflict — regardless of all that, it is crystal clear that there is no alternative to the preservation of the unity of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the implementation of the Dayton Agreement as a whole.

Hungary, a bordering country in the region, is vitally interested in the consolidation of peace and the preservation of stability in the former Yugoslav region, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular. The political, security, economic and psychological impact on the neighbouring countries, including Hungary, of the events that took place on the territory of the former Yugoslavia is well known today.

My country has reaffirmed on several occasions that it will remain ready in the future to play a role in the maintenance of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the international civilian police and within the framework of the Stabilization Force, in particular in the efforts for logistical and infrastructural reconstruction of the country. The rebuilding or the building of a number of bridges across the Sava River and the works in progress to rebuild the historic Mostar bridge, which are part of the world's cultural heritage, are also evidence of a concrete Hungarian contribution to the restoration of the country. The base of the Stabilization Force, which has been in operation for several years now in the south of Hungary, will always be available to advance the process of peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Hungary became a sponsor of draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1, which, in our view, can play a useful role in the consolidation of a peace that is still fragile in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is our hope that this draft resolution will receive the approval of our Assembly.

Mr. Çelem (Turkey): Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to focus the attention of the international community. The preservation of that country's integrity, sovereignty and political independence is a continuing responsibility undertaken by the United Nations by virtue of the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

The developments which took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina prior to the Dayton Agreement proved once again that the lack of a firm and prompt international response to aggression leads to further aggravation of crises. The Dayton/Paris Agreement therefore constituted a turning point in the unfolding of gruesome events in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1991 and 1995. The Agreement, with both military and civilian components, time and again proved to be without an alternative. Since the signing of the Peace Agreement, we have witnessed considerable progress in the military field.

However, lack of compliance on some crucial civilian aspects of the Agreement indicates that much still remains to be done. As accurately reflected most recently in the Bonn conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference, the volatility of the situation in the region compels us to maintain a stable security environment. The Secretary-General's report of 8 September 1997 and the report of the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina amply demonstrate that lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet been established.

In this respect, I would like to reaffirm Turkey's full support for the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the annexes thereto, signed on 14 December 1995. They constitute the basis for the achievement of a durable and just peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to heal the wounds of the war and to attain lasting peace, security and stability in this vitally important country of Europe, it is incumbent upon the international community to exert every effort to help Bosnia and Herzegovina in its arduous endeavour for reconciliation and reintegration.

Turkey, along with other States, is actively participating in the implementation of both the military and civilian aspects of the Dayton/Paris Agreement. For its part, Turkey is ready to continue to do so.

The sponsors of draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1, now before the Assembly, would like the General Assembly to reiterate its full commitment to the stabilization and consolidation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to reconciliation among its constituent peoples. We believe that it is high time for the international community to reiterate its concern about non-compliance by one party or the other on crucial aspects of the Peace Agreements and to demonstrate its willingness to take the necessary measures within its power to obtain full compliance.

For this purpose, it is essential that all the conditions envisaged by the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, including the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes, be materialized without delay. While we welcome the attention given to the protection and promotion of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to the establishment of the new common institutions, in accordance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement, we regret the continuing obstruction faced by refugees and displaced persons wishing to return to their homes.

We call upon all parties, including international organizations and member States, to contribute to the creation of conditions required to facilitate their return. We are concerned that out of 2.3 million displaced persons at the end of the hostilities, only 381,000 have returned home. The remaining 1.919 million people are still either refugees or displaced persons.

We would also like to stress the importance of the work of the International Tribunal for the process of reconciliation among the constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Turkey supports fully the efforts of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, and believes that States and parties to the Peace Agreement must meet their obligations to cooperate with the Tribunal. It is also the duty of the international community to exert the necessary pressure on the parties which do not live up to their legal obligations of cooperating with the Tribunal.

In this context, we would like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the fourth annual report of the International Tribunal, which in part states,

> "In other words, Republika Srpska is clearly and blatantly refusing to meet the obligations that it undertook when it signed the Dayton Peace Agreement, by which it solemnly undertook to cooperate with the Tribunal and, in particular, to

comply with orders issued pursuant to article 29 of the statute of the Tribunal". [A/52/375, para. 187]

The same report also portrays the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) as a party with an almost equally negative record of cooperation with the Tribunal. It is important to recall that, under the Dayton accord, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) is responsible for the Serbian entity's cooperation and compliance, as well as its own. This crucial aspect was also emphasized in the fourth annual report of the Tribunal.

As will be recalled, Security Council resolution 1088 (1996) and the Sintra Political Declaration of the Ministerial Meeting of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council have established that international economic aid is conditional upon compliance with and implementation of the Peace Agreement. This very crucial principle was reiterated recently at the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn.

In this regard, we would like to stress the need for timely information about the level of cooperation and compliance with the Tribunal and its orders, the status of the return of the refugees and displaced persons to and within Bosnia and Herzegovina and the status of implementation of the subregional arms-control agreements, so that necessary assessments can be made.

Turkey welcomes the positive steps taken towards a normalization of relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, there is ample room for progress in this respect. Therefore, we call upon the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to fulfil immediately the requirement of establishing full and unconditional diplomatic relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that such a development will eliminate another hurdle en route to normalization. Turkey also welcomes the successful conclusion of the local elections of 13 and 14 September 1997. We expect full and unequivocal implementation of the election results. Any attempt not to implement them will hamper the delicate process under way since 1995.

Economic revitalization is essential for the process of reconciliation, for the improvement of living conditions and for the maintenance of durable peace, both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region. However, we are dismayed that even after the opening of the Central Bank in August of this year, issuance of common currency, implementation of common customs-tariff schedules, installation of the administrative capacity of the Council of Ministers and the adoption of the foreign-investment law are not complete. We hope that necessary steps will be taken immediately so that Bosnia and Herzegovina obtains an economic policy framework which would allow it to start taking advantage of an International Monetary Fund standby arrangement and World Bank adjustment lending.

Turkey concurs with the conclusions of the London meeting of the Peace Implementation Council in December 1996, the Sintra Declaration of the Ministerial Meeting of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, the special declaration on the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted by the Organization of the Islamic Conference Contact Group and, lastly, the conclusion of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn, in order to strengthen the guiding principles of the civilian consolidation plan of the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with the Peace Agreement. The outcome of those conferences shows that a more persistent approach on the part of the international community is required to achieve our declared goals.

The Implementation Force (IFOR), led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), played a crucial role from the time it was deployed until it was reorganized as the Stabilization Force on 12 December 1996, in preserving peace and order and in ensuring progress on the rough road the peace process has been travelling on.

It is significant to note that IFOR has brought together 33 NATO and non-NATO countries in an unprecedented coalition for peace, stability and political and economic reconstruction. Although IFOR's mission has been accomplished, an international military presence is still required to provide the stability necessary for consolidating the peace. In this context, Turkey welcomed Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), which authorized the Stabilization Force (SFOR), as a legal successor of IFOR under unified command and control, in order to fulfil the role specified in annex 1-A and annex 2 of the Peace Agreement.

Turkey believes that SFOR, as a successor to IFOR, has been indispensable for the maintenance of a stable security environment essential for deterring or, if necessary, halting a resumption of hostilities. We are happy to note that currently 36 NATO and non-NATO countries participate in SFOR. We also welcome the emerging consensus on the need for a military presence

to continue beyond June 1998. Turkey, with its contributions to the United Nations International Police Task Force, is mindful of the civilian aspect of the peace process as well.

Draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1, which is before the General Assembly, reaffirms the international community's support for the independence, sovereignty, legal continuity and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized borders and calls upon those who are obstructing the peace process to fully comply with all the provisions of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement and its annexes. We would like to express our appreciation to the High Representative, Carlos Westendorp, and the international organizations for their unremitting efforts to establish lasting peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At this juncture, we would like to express our grief once again for the tragic death in a helicopter crash on 17 September 1997 of 12 United Nations personnel working for peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that we have a moral obligation to all those who have lost their lives since the beginning of the hostilities to bring our efforts to successful completion.

In conclusion, this is the most appropriate time to show that the international community is strongly committed to supporting and ensuring compliance by all parties with the provisions of the Peace Agreement and that international economic assistance is conditional upon compliance with and the implementation of the Peace Agreement. There is no doubt in our minds that the draft resolution before us will send a strong message in this direction.

Mr. Takht-Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Today's discussions on the situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina give all of us in the General Assembly the opportunity to express once again our commitments to the promotion and strengthening of peace in that country. Since the signing of the Peace Agreement, the international community has witnessed both positive and negative developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina that have created both hope and anxiety for the people there.

One of the positive achievements, which can pave the way for the institutionalization of democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was the recent holding of elections throughout the country on 13 and 14 September 1997 for municipal and local governments. The successful holding of the elections has demonstrated that the Bosnian people, with different ethnic and religious tendencies, can peacefully live together and deal with each other through democratic means. The international community expects full implementation of the outcome of the elections by the end of this year. The result of the elections, as was the case in the national elections in September 1996, further showed that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have opted for a multi-ethnic and multicultural country. Therefore, any attempt to violate and undermine the territorial integrity, national unity and independence of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized borders should be opposed categorically. We believe that all possible means to promote and strengthen the reintegration process and to establish viable and effective State institutions should be utilized.

Despite a degree of progress in the course of the implementation of certain provisions of the Peace Agreement, obstacles continue to hamper the full implementation of the Agreement as the prerequisite for peace and stability in the region.

It is a source of grave concern that the refugees and displaced persons wishing to return to their homes still face harassment and obstruction. We believe that further concrete measures should be taken so that the safe return of refugees can be accelerated, and those responsible for acts of intimidation and violence intended to discourage the voluntary return of refugees should be prosecuted. Moreover, every effort should be made to guarantee freedom of movement of people, goods, services and information throughout the country.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the role of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in bringing justice to the region. Unfortunately, despite repeated calls of the international community and in contravention of the Peace Agreement, war criminals remain free and continue to disrupt the political affairs of the county. It is our firm belief that peace and security in the region can be realized if the States and parties to the Peace Agreement endeavour to faithfully honour their obligations under the Agreement, in particular to cooperate with the Tribunal in the apprehension of indicted criminals.

The Islamic countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, have been at the forefront of helping their Bosnian brethren through the provision of humanitarian assistance during the war and through

participation in the rehabilitation and reconstruction programme after the signing of the Peace Agreement.

The Eighth Islamic Summit Conference, held in Tehran last week, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the commitment of the member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to preserve the legal continuity, unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina within its internationally recognized borders and fully supported the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, multi-ethnic and multicultural State of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It called on the Security Council to ensure the compliance by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republika Srpska entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the orders of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The Summit urged all countries and multilateral institutions that have pledged resources for the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina to immediately disburse the funds in order to ensure the timely completion of priority projects. The Conference also reaffirmed its support for the equip-and-train programme, which will foster long-term regional stability by creating a credible self-defence capability for the Federation. It further emphasized the importance of complying in good faith with the regional- stabilization and arms-limitation agreements.

In conclusion, we hope the General Assembly can send a unified message to all parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina that the international community is determined to support their efforts in the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a civic, multi-ethnic and multicultural State and the reconstruction process of the country.

Mr. Abdel Aziz (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Egyptian delegation is pleased to join the sponsors of the draft resolution before the General Assembly under agenda item 47 on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, not only because of the many objective provisions stated therein, but also as a reconfirmation that the continued involvement of the General Assembly in this important item reflects the importance accorded by the international community, as represented by this Assembly, to following up on the evolution of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and as a reaffirmation of its commitment to supporting the peace process in that State, whose people have suffered greatly during the last few years.

The consensus adoption by the General Assembly today of the draft resolution will undoubtedly reaffirm the role of the General Assembly in pursuing the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the extent of commitment by the parties concerned in carrying out their responsibilities in accordance with that Agreement. The adoption of the draft resolution also highlights the continued role of the United Nations, which started several years ago and which is now reflected in the presence there of the civilian Mission of the international Organization to contribute to the efforts to restore peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the region at large.

The implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina has undergone a positive development, beginning with the cessation of hostilities and ending with the successful holding of municipal elections throughout the country last September, a matter that is highlighted in the Assembly's draft resolution today.

The delegation of Egypt welcomes these developments and hopes for continued support and follow-up by the international community. In this context, we also welcome the special declaration on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina issued in Tehran on 7 December by the recent Ministerial Meeting of the Contact Group of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

We also welcome the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December.

On the other hand, this clear international interest in following the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina points up several issues, some of which should be stressed, and others of which should be firmly dealt with by the international community in order to guarantee the complete and successful implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Foremost among these issues is, the first, the need for a continued international military presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina beyond the expiration of the present mandate of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) next June. Developments have proved that SFOR plays a central role in bolstering the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia, including the civil aspects of these Agreements. Therefore, we welcome the conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn which reflected an emerging consensus in that direction. We would like to express our appreciation to the participants in the Stabilization Force for their contribution to the Force's successful performance of its duties.

Secondly, there is a pressing need at this stage to urge all the parties to carry out their responsibilities by cooperating fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and by turning over for trial all persons indicted for war crimes. Cooperation with the Tribunal represents a major part of the process of implementation of the Peace Agreement. Events have proved that the failure by the responsible authorities, particularly in the Republika Srpska, to turn over those indicted, and, their being allowed to participate in political activities pose a threat to the peace process.

The High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Carlos Westendorp, to whom I would like to express my sincere thanks for his efforts, has reaffirmed in his report that no tangible changes in the positions of the authorities in the Republika Srpska will be possible as long as those indicted for war crimes remain free. We wish to associate ourselves with the High Representative in that opinion. We see turning over those accused of war crimes as a basic step towards affirmation of the unity of the State and towards dealing with the issue of the return of refugees and displaced persons to their original homes.

We urge the international community not to allow extremist elements to hinder the successful and full implementation of the Peace Agreement and to take effective measures to turn in all persons indicted for war crimes at the earliest possible opportunity.

Thirdly, I would like to point out something to which we in Egypt accord great importance: the reconstruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the reactivation of common institutions in a manner that would assist the forces of ethnic unity. We, on our part, have upheld all our material commitments, both in the framework of the donor-States conference held in Brussels last July and in the framework of common material assistance provided by the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the people and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We remain ready to respond to any request made by the Bosnian authorities in that regard. In this context, we would like to highlight a point that is stressed by the draft resolution before the Assembly today, namely, that assistance from the international community remains conditional upon the degree of commitment shown by the parties to implementing their commitments in accordance with the Peace Agreement. Moreover, we hope that this will provide an impetus for all parties concerned to cooperate with a view to ensuring a better future for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina within a State that is multi-ethnic and multicultural within a framework of full respect for Bosnia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): I have the honour, on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution [A/52/L.67/Rev.1], and with the aim of securing consensus on it, to propose the following few oral revisions to the draft. I will read them slowly, at dictation speed, so that all representatives can take them down.

The first revision would be to include an additional preambular paragraph, to be placed after the current seventh preambular paragraph, which appears on page 2 of the English text as the second paragraph. The text of this new paragraph would read as follows:

> "*Expressing support* for the efforts of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in facilitating the return of refugees and displaced persons throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in particular the Open City project carried out by the UNHCR."

This would be the first revision, in the form of an addition.

Secondly, the subsequent preambular paragraph, which is currently the eighth preambular paragraph, would be slightly modified so that the first few words would read: "*Supporting also* the efforts ..."

This would require the deletion of the current words, "*Expressing support* for", which would be replaced by "*Supporting also*".

Finally, in operative paragraph 8, we suggest the deletion of the following words at the end of the paragraph:

> "as was confirmed in particular in the joint declaration adopted at Geneva on 14 August 1996".

These words should be deleted, so that operative paragraph 8, as revised, would read,

> "*Recognizes* that responsibility for consolidating the peace lies primarily with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina;".

The remainder of current operative paragraph 8 would be deleted.

These are the revisions which I have the honour to introduce orally at this stage of consideration of this item, with the expectation that consensus on the draft resolution will be secured.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1.

Before giving the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation in explanation of vote before the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Fedotov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The approach of the Russian Federation to the draft resolution before us today, as an active participant in all stages of the Bosnian settlement, is based, first and foremost, on the extent to which its provisions correspond to the key tasks on the agenda of the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This process must be carried out in strict compliance with the Peace Agreement and other international documents on a Bosnian settlement and must not permit a free, one-sided interpretation of the mandate of international structures, which could lead to a build-up of military might in the arsenal of the peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We note the work of the sponsors to reflect precisely this approach in the draft resolution in document A/52/L.67/Rev.1, as orally revised, by the representative of Slovenia. Unfortunately, however, they were unable to eliminate the biased tone of the draft resolution so that it could fully reflect the complexity and multiplicity of aspects surrounding implementation of the Dayton Agreement. Our delegation cannot agree with, for example, the excessive detail in the draft resolution on provisions regarding the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, while at the same time other serious and pressing problems involved in the settlement are disregarded and not even mentioned, including for example, restoration of the multi-ethnic status of Sarajevo.

The correction of such distorted emphasis will promote the advancement of the settlement process, as well as its stability and irreversibility. Despite our continuing reservations, the Russian delegation does not object to the adoption of this draft resolution without a vote, and is ready to support the consensus, because of the constructive attitude displayed by the co-sponsors and their readiness to take our amendments into account.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1, as orally revised.

I should like to announce that since the introduction of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors of A/52/L.67/Rev.1: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Hungary, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Liechtenstein, Senegal, Singapore and Tunisia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/52/L.67/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 52/150).

Agenda item 44

The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/687)

Draft resolution (A/52/L.65)

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Argentina to introduce draft resolution A/52/L.65.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General for Haiti, consisting of Canada, Chile, France, the United States of America, Venezuela and Argentina, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/52/L.65, on the situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti.

This draft resolution, which we hope will be favourably viewed by all delegations, extends the mandate of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti of the United Nations and the Organization of American States, as requested by Haiti's President, Mr. René Préval, in his letter to the Secretary-General of 10 November 1997, and by the report of the Secretary-General (A/52/687).

The delegations of Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which are sponsoring this draft, propose that the mandate of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti be extended until 31 December 1998, with the same functions that it has had to date: providing technical assistance, promoting of human rights and civic education and monitoring the human rights situation.

Three years have passed since Haiti's return to constitutional order. All the reports we have received refer to tangible progress in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Nevertheless, the progress achieved to date needs to be consolidated. In particular, there is a need to concentrate efforts on the reform of the judiciary, whose operational difficulties are having a negative effect on other areas of Haitian civilian life.

Cooperation between the International Civilian Mission and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti, created by Security Council resolution 1141 (1997), will remain essential for the fulfilment of the respective mandates of these Missions, as was cooperation with the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti through the end of November.

On the basis of President René Préval's request and the recommendations of the Secretary-General, the countries constituting the group of Friends of the Secretary-General for Haiti call upon the Assembly to give its favourable consideration to this draft resolution, which renews the mandate of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti of the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

The definitive consolidation of Haiti's political institutions will depend upon the firm determination of its people and the wisdom of its political leaders. However, the effort of the international community remains essential in order for that will and wisdom to mature and grow strong.

Finally, the sponsors wish to express their gratitude to the Secretary-General and all of the officials of the Organization who have dealt with this delicate matter for their dedication and initiative.

Mr. Boucher (Barbados): I have the honour to speak in support of draft resolution A/52/L.65, on the situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti, on behalf of the members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) that are Member States of the United Nations. Last June Haiti became the fourteenth such member of CARICOM.

With the termination of the mandate of the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti on 30 November 1997, the process of democracy and reconstruction in Haiti has reached a critical stage. We believe that future progress will largely depend on the Government's growing capacity to secure a climate of domestic stability, which is essential to accelerate the country's economic and social development.

We recognize the progress made in restoring the mechanisms for the protection of the rights and freedoms of the Haitian people, so long denied. CARICOM is committed to giving its full support to these efforts. CARICOM States therefore welcome the establishment of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission, which will continue to help professionalize the Haitian National Police force and improve its ability to perform its vital function. We wish to express our deep appreciation to the members of the Security Council, to the group of Friends of Haiti and to other concerned delegations for making this outcome possible.

As we take stock of the situation in Haiti, it is useful to recall that despite its long history of independence, it was not until December 1990, following the first free elections, that the seeds of democracy took root, ending the long nightmare of military rule. The international community warmly welcomed this new beginning by the Haitian people. Little did we realize that in seven short months the dark days of dictatorship would return to engulf the country for three more years.

However, thanks to the resolve of the Haitian people and the support of the international community, the restoration of the legitimate Government in 1994 afforded Haiti a second chance to consolidate its fragile democracy. CARICOM States demonstrated their commitment to the cause by standing with the multilateral force in support of Haiti at this critical juncture, notwithstanding their meagre security resources.

We recognize that economic rehabilitation and reconstruction constitute the major tasks facing the Haitian Government and people and that significant international assistance is indispensable for sustainable development. The draft resolution before us reaffirms the

commitment of the international community to continue its assistance to Haiti.

CARICOM States share this assessment and pledge their full support to the continuing international effort. We are mindful that the Government faces a formidable challenge and that progress will be uneven. That is why CARICOM States have been insistent in urging the international community to stay the course with Haiti, given the long-term nature of the development task ahead. We know that the agents of instability and strife lurk just around the corner, ready to re-engage at the earliest opportunity.

The deterioration of economic and social conditions in the three years following the military coup in 1991 has taken a heavy toll on a country which already had the lowest development indicators in the hemisphere. The legacy of the trade embargoes, the suspension of all but humanitarian aid, the breakdown of economic and social infrastructure, the collapse of industry and the plummeting by some 30 per cent of the gross domestic product — together these present a major challenge to the reconstruction effort.

So far, the robust economic recovery envisaged following the return to democratic order and the resumption of external aid has remained elusive. Some estimates put gross-domestic-product growth in 1997 at less than 2 per cent, or just equal to the annual rate of population increase. This performance falls short of the minimum level of economic growth required to make a difference in the living conditions of the majority of the population.

CARICOM States believe that a policy to speed up economic growth must be given the highest priority, not only to bolster the democratic process but also to foster the confidence among the Haitian people that at last they will begin to share in the fruits of development which they have been denied for so long.

We therefore urge the international community, and especially the multilateral institutions, to redouble their efforts to help Haiti secure its democratic future through sustained development. We applaud the outstanding contribution of the International Civilian Mission. We recognize, however, that since external assistance will be effective only if it builds on Haiti's self-help efforts, Haiti will therefore need to do its part to create the domestic-policy environment for rapid economic growth and poverty reduction necessary to make broad-based development a reality for all its people.

Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union on the question of the situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and the associated country of Cyprus — associate themselves with this statement.

Since the re-establishment of constitutional legality in Haiti three years ago, the European Union has actively participated in the international community's efforts to create the conditions necessary for the strengthening of democracy and for ensuring full respect for human rights in that country.

For this reason, the European Union is seriously concerned by the political situation that has prevailed in Haiti for several months, as described by the Secretary-General in his report. We encourage the political parties in Haiti to cooperate in mediation efforts to find a solution to the current paralysis of public authority, which has a deleterious effect on the authority of the State at a particularly delicate stage of Haiti's development.

Elections are to be held in November 1998, and the period of time that separates us from that date is of crucial importance for the consolidation of democracy and national reconstruction. The European Union expresses its firm hope that the Haitian people will be afforded the opportunity to express themselves at that time in free, honest and transparent elections, which will be held according to rules and procedures accepted by all.

The European Union considers it imperative that comprehensive and long-term sustained assistance be provided to Haiti by the international community. Continued support, particularly by international financial institutions and other United Nations organs, is necessary in order to realize a durable and solid process that will reinforce political stability in the country.

In general, the Union is concerned by the difficult economic and social situation, by the high rate of unemployment, by the increasing cost of living and by the too-slow rhythm at which change is taking place in

the country. The European Union reaffirms its determination to continue its support to strengthening the rule of law and the economic and social development of Haiti. Thus, between October 1994 and the end of 1996 the European Community, through the European Commission, contributed ECU 310 million for that purpose. Since then, other funds have been made available, in particular through the National Indicative Programme signed in April 1997, which provides for an additional contribution of ECU 148 million. The Union has also undertaken to increase its efforts to provide aid for the juridical system and for judicial reform.

However, the European Union emphasizes that the implementation of the international assistance programmes requires active participation on the part of the authorities and their local partners.

The report of the Secretary General notes that even if the population has continued for the most part to enjoy its individual rights and fundamental liberties, the situation regarding respect for human rights remains fragile. In particular, the police forces, which are new and inexperienced, have not yet done all they should to improve their human rights record. The Union is also concerned by the persistence of violence and turmoil in the country.

The absence of a strategy and a programme for judicial reform has so far blocked the development of institutions and the real protection of human rights, and this has in turn compromised the development of police and prison institutions. The European Union expresses its hope that the new Law and Judicial Reform Preparatory Committee, whose creation it financed, will encourage the preparation of a judicial reform plan, as well as the strengthening of institutions in this sector.

The International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH) is called upon to play an essential role to strengthen the democratic institutions in Haiti by monitoring the respect of human rights by the security forces, by providing technical assistance to the operations of the police forces and the judicial personnel, and by supporting the development of a programme to promote and protect human rights. These activities are essential for the restoration of a climate of freedom and tolerance, which is necessary for the consolidation of democracy and justice in Haiti in the long term.

In a related field, the Union welcomes the adoption of Security Council resolution 1141 (1997), which established, for the duration of one year, the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti, whose assignment will be to help the Haitian Government by providing it with support and assistance for the professionalization of the Haitian National Police.

The European Union supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General, contained in the draft resolution before us, to prolong the mandate of the United Nations component of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH) until 31 December 1998. The 15 member States of the European Union have also co-sponsored this draft resolution.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item for this meeting. We shall hear the remaining speakers this afternoon, after the General Assembly has considered the reports of the Sixth Committee.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.